



# VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Freedom Of Information Request

Instructions for Requesting Records

Not all police reports are available to the public. State law, Vernon Police Department policy and Tolland States Attorney's Office policy govern the release of police reports. The records clerks of the Vernon Police Department are mandated to obey these laws and policies in releasing police reports to the public.

### What may be released?

Access to public records is controlled by Sec. 1-210 CGS. The statute text may be viewed on the State web site. All records maintained or kept on file by the police department are public records and may viewed and copies obtained unless the requested information falls within specific exemptions identified within the statute.

The following reports **are not public information and cannot be obtained from records.**

- Cases still under investigation.
- Cases in which an arrest has been made or a warrant has been issued until the case is disposed of in court and a written disposition has been issued.
- Arrest Warrants, see above
- Accident Reports involving an arrest, until the case is disposed of in court and a written disposition has been issued. Exception – persons directly involved in the accident, owners of property damaged by the accident or their legal representative may receive copies of reports before court action is completed.
- Cases in which a juvenile has been referred to the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters (release of these reports is controlled by the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters)

The examples listed above should not be considered an all-inclusive list of records that may not be subject to release by the Vernon Police Department. Information may also be required to be removed from certain records that are otherwise releasable.

Questions about availability of records may be directed to the Records Supervisor at 860-872-9126, ext. 143.

### How can I request information?

A request to receive copies of reports must be made in writing. The request should specifically describe what information you wish to obtain. Providing case numbers is the best way to ask for a report but is not required. If the report requested can not be located because of insufficient information your request will be returned. It is not required that the request be made on a specific form, however, one is provided to ensure the minimum information needed to process the request is obtained. The name, address and phone number of the person making the request must be given. The request may be made by mail or in person during the hours the Police Department Records Room is open. If you wish the report to be mailed to back you must provide a self-addressed envelope and with sufficient postage to cover the cost of mailing the documents back. The Records Room is open Monday through Friday, except holidays, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. During periods of short staffing we may close without prior notice. We are located at 725 Hartford Tpk. (the intersection of Hartford Tpk. and West Rd.). The cost for a report is .50 cents per page or side. Costs for other documents are available upon request. To avoid any inconvenience to both yourself and records personnel, please contact the Records Unit at 860-872-9126, ext. 145, to learn if a report is available and the cost. If you are paying in cash you must have the correct change as we do not make change.

### How long will it take for me to receive a copy?

In most cases the report will be available in a matter of minutes. However, it may take much longer if the request requires extensive research and review. By law we must respond to the request within four (4) business days of receiving the request. The response will be one of three possibilities.

- The requested material is provided,
- The requested material is denied or
- You will be informed of when you can expect to receive the requested material.

### What if I can not afford the cost?

The Freedom of Information statutes allow the agency to waive fees if the individual claims they are indigent. The statute requires the individual to provide proof of indigence but does not define what that proof should be. The Vernon Police Department requires a notarized statement of indigence. A form for that purpose is available at the police department.

### What happens if my request is denied?

If your request is denied, you will be told why. If you feel the request was improperly denied you may make a written appeal to the State Freedom of Information Commission. You will find the instructions and forms on the State web site.